

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-41 (Canceled).

Claim 42 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim ~~41~~ 81, wherein at least one guiding element ~~(28)~~ is displaceably arranged in ~~a the~~ base body ~~(29)~~.

Claim 43 (Canceled).

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim ~~43~~ 81, wherein three guiding elements ~~(28)~~, ~~which are preferably offset by an angle of 120°~~, are arranged about the welding wire ~~(13)~~.

Claim 45 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 42, wherein the base body ~~(29)~~ together with ~~said at least one guiding element~~ ~~(28)~~ is, preferably centrally, arranged in ~~a the~~ drive sleeve ~~(43)~~, ~~with the drive means~~ ~~(37)~~ being formed by ~~this~~ drive sleeve ~~(43)~~.

Claim 46 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 45, wherein the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ is formed with an internal thread adapted to the contour of the transport element ~~(33)~~ and engaged by at least ~~on~~ one transport element ~~(33)~~.

Claim 47 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 46, wherein each of the internal thread of the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~, the base body ~~(29)~~ and the guiding element ~~(28)~~ are preferably elements is conically designed.

Claim 48 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 46, wherein the base body ~~(29)~~ comprises a preferably cylindrical projection ~~(42)~~, wherein the cylindrical projection which is mounted in the interior of the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~, preferably via a bearing assembly ~~(44)~~.

Claim 49 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 48, wherein the base body ~~(29)~~, on its side located opposite the projection ~~(42)~~, comprises a preferably rectangularly designed positioning flange ~~(45)~~.

Claim 50 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 49, the positioning flange ~~(45)~~ is connected with a retention element ~~(46)~~ in a rotationally fast manner.

Claim 51 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 50, wherein the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ is connected with a coupling element ~~(47)~~, said coupling element ~~(47)~~ being arranged on the opposite side of the retention element ~~(46)~~.

Claim 52 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 51, wherein the coupling element ~~(47)~~ or the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ is directly connected with a drive ~~(57)~~, in particular ~~electromotor~~.

Claim 53 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 52, wherein the drive ~~(57)~~ is arranged axially to the wire feed device ~~(27)~~.

Claim 54 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 53, wherein the drive ~~(57)~~ comprises a hollow shaft ~~(58)~~, wherein the hollow shaft which is connected with the coupling element ~~(47)~~ and through which wherein the welding wire ~~(13)~~ is passable through the hollow shaft to the wire feed device ~~(27)~~.

Claim 55 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 52, wherein the drive ~~(57)~~, in particular a casing ~~(59)~~ of the drive ~~(57)~~, is rotationally connected with a further retention element ~~(60)~~ in a ~~rotationally~~ fast manner.

Claim 56 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed according to claim 42, wherein a pressure element ~~(61)~~ is arranged in the base body ~~(29)~~ so as to be positioned between the positioning flange ~~(45)~~ and the guiding ~~element~~ ~~(28)~~ elements and to exert a pressure force onto the guiding ~~element~~ ~~(28)~~ elements.

Claim 57 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 42, wherein ~~the~~ each guiding element ~~(28)~~ comprises a guide groove ~~(38)~~ and at least one guide pin ~~(50)~~ is arranged on the base body ~~(29)~~ to engage said guide groove ~~(38)~~ of the guiding element ~~(28)~~.

Claim 58 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim ~~41~~ 81, wherein ~~the~~ each transport element ~~(33)~~ is designed in the form of a ball.

Claim 59 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 45, wherein the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ has an outer diameter ~~(67)~~ of between 20mm and 30mm.

Claim 60 (Currently Amended): A The wire feed device according to claim 41 81, wherein the wire feed device (27) is arranged in at least one of a welding torch (10) and/or and a welding apparatus (1).

Claim 61 (Currently Amended): A method for feeding a welding wire (13) from a wire storage to a point of consumption, wherein a plurality of guiding elements for guiding the welding wire are arranged in a base body, each guiding element including a guide path along which a plurality of transport elements are displaceably mounted, wherein the guiding elements and the base body are arranged in a drive sleeve to form a drive mechanism connected with at least one transport element of each guiding element, wherein the welding wire (13) is guided through at least one guide element (28), and wherein several transport elements (33) are guided in at least one guiding element (28) to circulate along a guide path (32), with at least one transport element (33) being is in operative connection with the welding wire (13) on a side of the respective guiding element (28) facing the welding wire (13), and on at least one further side of the guiding element (28), at least one further transport element (33) is displaced by a the drive means (37) mechanism, thus causing the further transport elements (33) arranged in the guide path (32) to be moved on by said at least one further transport element

(33) displaced by the drive means (37) mechanism, wherein at least one guiding element (28) is displaced for adaptation to the diameter of the welding wire (13).

Claim 62 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 61, wherein ~~the~~ each guiding element (28) is displaced in ~~a~~ the base body (29), ~~preferably~~ in at least one of ~~a~~ the longitudinal and/or and a vertical direction.

Claim 63 (Canceled).

Claim 64 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 62, wherein ~~preferably~~ three guiding elements (28), ~~which are~~ offset by 120°, are arranged in the base body (29).

Claim 65 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 62, wherein the base body (29), ~~together with~~ ~~the guiding element (28) arranged therein,~~ is ~~preferably~~ centrically arranged in ~~a~~ the drive sleeve (43) ~~forming the drive means (37)~~.

Claim 66 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 65, wherein at least one transport element

~~(33)~~ engages a thread ~~(36)~~ of the drive sleeve means ~~(37)~~, with the a contour of the thread ~~(36)~~ being adapted to the a contour of the transport element—~~(33)~~.

Claim 67 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 66, wherein each of the thread ~~(36)~~ of the drive sleeve—~~(43)~~, the base body ~~(29)~~ and the guiding element ~~(28)~~ ~~are preferably elements~~ is conically designed.

Claim 68 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 66, wherein the base body ~~(29)~~ comprises a ~~preferably~~ cylindrical projection ~~(42)~~, ~~via which~~ the base body ~~(29)~~ ~~is being~~ mounted in the interior of the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~, ~~preferably via a bearing assembly~~ ~~(44)~~ via the cylindrical projection.

Claim 69 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 68, wherein the base body—~~(29)~~, on its side located opposite the projection—~~(42)~~, comprises a ~~preferably~~ rectangularly designed positioning flange—~~(45)~~.

Claim 70 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 69, wherein the positioning flange ~~(45)~~ is connected with a retention element ~~(46)~~ in a rotationally fast

manner.

Claim 71 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 70, wherein a coupling element ~~(47)~~ is connected with the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ on the opposite side of the retention element ~~(46)~~.

Claim 72 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 71, wherein the coupling element ~~(47)~~ or the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ is directly connected with a drive ~~(57)~~, in particular electromotor.

Claim 73 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 72, wherein the drive ~~(57)~~ is arranged axially to the wire feed device.

Claim 74 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 73, wherein the drive ~~(57)~~ is connected with the coupling element ~~(47)~~ via a hollow shaft ~~(58)~~ arranged in the drive ~~(57)~~, said welding wire ~~(13)~~ being fed through said hollow shaft ~~(58)~~.

Claim 75 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 72, wherein the drive ~~(57)~~, in particular a

~~casing (59) of the drive (57), is rotationally connected with a further retention element (60) in a rotationally fast manner.~~

Claim 76 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 62, wherein a pressure force is exerted on the guiding element ~~(28)~~ by a pressure element ~~(61)~~ arranged in the base body ~~(29)~~ between the positioning flange ~~(45)~~ and the guiding element ~~(28)~~.

Claim 77 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 62, wherein at least one guide pin ~~(50)~~ arranged on the base body ~~(29)~~ engages a guide groove ~~(38)~~ of the guiding element ~~(28)~~ and the guiding element ~~(28)~~ is displaced via said assembly.

Claim 78 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 61, wherein the transport element ~~(33)~~ is designed in the form of a ball.

Claim 79 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim 65, wherein the drive sleeve ~~(43)~~ has an outer diameter ~~(67)~~ preferably of between 20mm and 30mm.

Claim 80 (Currently Amended): A The feeding method according to claim ~~61~~ 86, wherein the wire feed device ~~(27)~~ is preferably arranged in at least one of a welding torch ~~(10)~~ and/or and a welding apparatus ~~(1)~~.

Claim 81 (New): A wire feed device for transporting a welding wire from a wire storage to a point of consumption comprising:

(a) a plurality of guiding elements for guiding the welding wire, each guiding element including a guide path along which a plurality of transport elements are displaceably mounted;

(b) a base body; and

(c) a drive sleeve connected with at least one transport element of each guiding element;

wherein at least one further transport element is connected with the welding wire in at least one of a force-locking manner and a form-locking manner;

wherein the base body and the guiding elements are arranged in the drive sleeve; and

wherein at least one guiding element is displaceably arranged to adapt to a diameter of the welding wire.

Claim 82 (New): The wire feed device according to claim 44, wherein the guiding elements are offset by an angle of 120

degrees.

Claim 83 (New): The wire feed device according to claim 48, wherein the base body is mounted in the interior of the drive sleeve via a bearing assembly.

Claim 84 (New): The wire feed device according to claim 52, wherein the drive connecting the coupling element or the drive sleeve is an electromotor.

Claim 85 (New): The wire feed device according to claim 55, wherein the drive comprises a drive casing rotationally connected with the further connection element.

Claim 86 (New): The feeding method according to claim 68, wherein the base body is mounted in the interior of the drive sleeve via a bearing assembly ~~(44)~~.

Claim 87 (New): The feeding method according to claim 72, wherein the drive is an electromotor.

Claim 88 (New): The feeding method according to claim 75, wherein the drive comprises a drive casing rotationally connected with the further connection element.